Saskatchewan Centennial 2005

100 YEARS OF HEART

2005-2006 PROVINCIAL BUDGET
PERFORMANCE PLAN

SASKATCHEWAN LEARNING

105-05096/

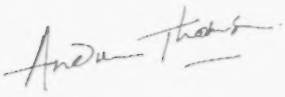
Minister's Message

In January 2005, the Government hosted the 2005 Saskatchewan Centennial Summit bringing together education and training, business, industry, youth and government leaders and decision-makers to generate the ideas, vision and strategies that will move the Province forward.

At the Summit, our Department released the *Saskatchewan Labour Market Trends: 2004 Update*. The report shows the need for more skilled workers in the Province due to retiring "baby boomers". The report also showed the importance of increasing education attainment levels for First Nations and Métis people to enable them to participate more fully in the labour force. It is important, now more than ever, to ensure that all individuals have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to take advantage of new job opportunities. We must position ourselves, and our Province, so that we have the flexibility and capacity to respond positively to change.

It is my pleasure to present the Performance Plan for the Province's learning sector for 2005-06 and beyond. In this plan, we recognize that all partners in the learning sector must work together to identify and achieve our vision, goals and objectives and address our challenges. Along with our partners in the sector, I am committed to completing the key actions identified in this plan and reporting on our progress in our 2005-06 Annual Report, in July 2006.

Together we are well positioned to meet our challenges as our Province moves forward into our second century.



Andrew Thomson
Minister of Learning

Who We Are

The mandate of Saskatchewan Learning is to advance the social, economic and personal well-being of Saskatchewan people. The Department accomplishes this mandate through leadership and support programs from early childhood development, through pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12, to technical training and post-secondary education and public library services that are provided by over 580 staff who are employed in the Department's 22 branches and seven regional offices throughout the Province. The Department provides responsive leadership to meet the learning and development needs of Saskatchewan children, youth and adults, and to meet the employment needs of the provincial labour market.

THE LEARNING SECTOR

Saskatchewan Learning works collaboratively with its sector partners in support of our shared vision

The learning sector:

- Employs about 25,000 people;
- Serves approximately 300,000 students and 500,000 library patrons;
- Graduates approximately 12,000 Grade 12 students, 4,400 certificate/diploma recipients, 4,900 degree recipients and 1,000 journeypersons annually;
- Operates and maintains approximately $5.5 billion in capital facilities and equipment; and
- Engages local, regional and provincial boards of community volunteers or education representatives in governance of 81 school divisions (28 as of January 2006), 320 public libraries in 10 public library systems, eight regional colleges operating in over 40 communities, four Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) campuses, Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) which includes Dumont Technical Institute (DTI), Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT), First Nations University of Canada (FNUC), the University of Regina (U of R) and University of Saskatchewan (U of S), the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (SATCC) and private vocational schools.

The sector is committed to lifelong learning and the development of knowledge and competencies that will enable each citizen to adapt to and actively participate in all spheres of social, cultural, economic and civic life.

The learning sector has a profound impact on the social and economic well-being of the Province through the education and training of individuals and dynamic partnerships with individual employers, communities and industry. The learning sector contributes to a vibrant culture within the Province through language programs, fine arts education, Francophone, First

Nations and Métis cultural development, community programs and services, and libraries. We enhance participation in the civic life of the Province by preparing individuals for active citizenship, relying on local and institutional decision-making expertise across the Province.

The emphasis on early childhood development and the *KidsFirst* program fosters a community-based network of supports and services that focuses on the healthy growth and development of children and supports the primary role of families. *KidsFirst* is a component of the overall Early Childhood Development Strategy of which the Departments of Learning, Health and Community Resources and Employment share the responsibility. The Early Childhood Development Branch of Saskatchewan Learning releases its own performance plan and annual report that can be found at www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/ecd/.

A new Early Learning and Child Care initiative announced by the federal government will promote early childhood development and support the participation of parents in employment or training by improving access to affordable, quality early learning and child care programs and services. The Departments of Learning and Community Resources and Employment have worked collaboratively to devise a plan to use federal funds to structure a cohesive and comprehensive approach to Early Learning and Child Care in Saskatchewan. These departments will work with interested parties at the regional and community levels to implement changes over the next five years.

There are varying accountability relationships between the Minister of Learning and the various institutions, agencies, boards and organizations that comprise the learning sector. These relationships differ by degree of accountability and are set out in over 20 pieces of legislation, as well as formal agreements and regulations.

DEPARTMENT OF LEARNING

The Department's areas of responsibility include: Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 education, Early Childhood Development, Student Support Programs, Training Programs, Post-Secondary Education, Public Library System and Teachers' Pensions and Benefits.

The Department of Learning establishes policies and ensures legislation or regulations to provide a high-quality pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 education for students. These include key elements, such as the certification of teachers, the curriculum and instructional practices to be used in all schools, the regulation of independent schools and home-based education, the distribution of provincial funding and capital grants to school divisions and the structure and boundaries of school divisions. The Department's work is guided by ongoing collaboration with sector partners that include: League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents; Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials; Saskatchewan School Boards Association; and the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation.

For adult learners, the Department provides leadership and financial support for students and high-quality programs and services in the post-secondary education and training sector. Full-

time and part-time degree, diploma, certificate, non-credit, continuing education and apprenticeship programs are offered through the universities, SIAST, regional colleges, SATCC, SIIT, GDI, private vocational schools and in the workplace. Access to basic education, skills training and income support are managed through the Department. Financial assistance is available to qualified post-secondary students.

SCHOOL BOARDS

School boards are responsible for delivering the learner program including the appropriate curriculum and instructional approaches and children and youth programs and services.

School boards are required to comply with provincial statutes, regulations and policies and, as elected bodies, they are accountable to their local electors. They receive operating and capital funding from the Province and levy taxes to raise the local share of school division costs.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM

The universities are accountable to the Minister of Learning and have autonomy over academic decisions. The provincial government appoints half of the members on the universities' Boards of Governors. SIAST, SATCC and the regional colleges are directly accountable to the Minister of Learning for all aspects of the institution or organization. The provincial government appoints SIAST, regional colleges and SATCC board members. The Government provides operating grants to the universities, SIAST, regional colleges and SATCC, as well as capital funding to the universities, SIAST and the regional colleges. Private vocational schools are privately owned and operated, but regulated in accordance with provincial legislation.

The Province's strong and competitive learning sector is supported by innovation and first-class research and development activity within our universities, which attracts and retains researchers among the most skilful in the country. The Department also works with other provincial departments, the federal government, the private sector and the universities to recognize and support research and development activity. The Department of Learning works with its partners to recognize and respond to the changing labour market, with its increased emphasis on basic employability and knowledge-based skills.

LIBRARIES

Public libraries are operated by 10 autonomous public library system boards, established under legislation. They are required to contribute to province-wide cataloguing databases, interlibrary loans and reciprocal borrowing and are responsible for decisions on collections, programs and services. Public libraries receive funding from the provincial government and municipalities. The Multitype Library Board is appointed by the Minister and includes representatives from public, post-secondary education and special libraries, the Provincial Library and the Department

of Learning on behalf of schools. It tables an annual report with the legislature. The Board facilitates co-operative development of the multitype library system to share services and resources for mutual benefit.

The Provincial Library facilitates equitable access to the world of information and resources for Saskatchewan residents. Under legislation, Provincial Library co-ordinates and supports the province-wide public library system while encouraging co-operation and resource sharing among all libraries in the Province, including support to the Multitype Library Board and its programs. Public libraries provide access to reading materials and new technologies, and support community development, the cultural and recreational life of the community, lifelong learning, formal education programs and home schooling, lifelong self-development and development of skills in computer and information literacy.

Plan at a Glance

The involvement of the learning sector in the development and implementation of the performance plan reflects the importance of partnerships within the sector and the significant role third parties play in achieving the plan's goals and objectives. More than three-quarters of the Department of Learning's budget is provided to third parties. The learning sector has a long history of collaborative and consultative partnerships that support the achievement of common priorities.

The 2005-06 Performance Plan has been developed by the Learning Sector Steering Committee. The Committee includes executive representatives from the following organizations and institutions: the Saskatchewan School Boards Association(SSBA); the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation (STF); the League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents (LEADS); the Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials (SASBO); SIIT; GDI; public libraries; the Multitype Library Board; regional colleges; the SATCC; SIAST; U of S; U of R; FNUC; private vocational schools; and the Department of Learning (Chair). The plan is consistent with and strengthens the strategic directions in the Department of Learning's 2004-05 Performance Plan through the involvement of the sector partners.

The Learning Sector Steering Committee met three times during 2004-05 to discuss the development of the performance plan. The Committee's approach included exploration of the issues and trends currently impacting the sector and articulation and ongoing refinement of the vision, goals and objectives.

The plan responds to the Province's demographic and labour market trends. Building on the restructuring of K-12 school divisions and the implementation of School*Plus*, the plan reflects a new vision for the Province's K-12 system focused on equity, sustainability, responsiveness to communities, relevance for learners, and achievement of positive outcomes for all students. It reinforces the importance of the success of Aboriginal people at all stages of their educational experience and enhances capacity within the post-secondary system to meet labour market needs. The plan helps make post-secondary education more affordable for post-secondary students and their families.

The plan also reflects the benefits of the creation of the Department of Learning in 2002 that brought together Early Childhood Development, the provincial library, K-12 education and the post-secondary system. It includes a focus on early learning and care, reflecting the critical importance of the pre-school years to positive educational and other outcomes later in life. It also identifies the fundamental role public libraries play in supporting learning and providing access to information. It supports improved connections between the K-12 and post-secondary systems and the labour market and highlights the importance of career development.

The performance plan is a work in progress, allowing the learning sector partners to refine the plan in response to changing needs, increased understanding of roles and responsibilities and the linkages to be made across the sector to support lifelong learning. The plan's goals and objectives reflect broad, critical priorities that are likely to remain constant over a number of years. The plan's key actions focus on those to be undertaken in 2005-06 and reflect activities from across the learning sector.

The 2005-06 Department of Learning Annual Report, to be released in July 2006, will report progress on the 2005-06 Performance Plan for the learning sector.

OUR VISION – Through lifelong learning, all Saskatchewan people become knowledgeable and skilled citizens contributing to and benefiting from society and the economy. The Province is enriched socially, culturally, linguistically and economically through the leadership of the learning sector.

GOAL 1

Learners succeed

OBJECTIVE 1 - *Optimize children's readiness to learn in school*

Performance Measures:

- Under development

OBJECTIVE 2 - *Enhance learner outcomes*

Performance Measures:

- Number of graduates/completers by type of credential, and selected education and training programs
- Per cent of students in a cohort starting Grade 10 who finish within three years after they start
- Percentage of K-12 students performing at age appropriate (target) levels in mathematics, science, reading and writing on national assessments

OBJECTIVE 3 - *Deliver high quality curriculum, programs, services and resources*

Performance Measures:

- Public satisfaction with the learning sector
- Number of post-secondary programs eligible for accreditation, which have achieved accreditation
- Enrollments by type of credential and type of delivery

OBJECTIVE 4 – *Increase access to information and resources through improved use of technology*

Performance Measure:

- The number of on-line courses under development, available for delivery and delivered

GOAL 2

A seamless continuum of formal and informal learning

OBJECTIVE 1 - *Support co-ordinated and aligned sector planning and operations*

Performance Measures:

- Under development

OBJECTIVE 2 - *Support transitions among and within sector programs and services, as well as employment*

Performance Measure:

- Employment rate by educational attainment of the working age population, age 15+

GOAL 3

Inclusiveness

OBJECTIVE 1 - *Increase the participation and success of Aboriginal people in sector programs, services and employment*

Performance Measures:

- Educational attainment of the Aboriginal population in Saskatchewan, age 15+
- Aboriginal graduation rates by type of credential

OBJECTIVE 2 - *Increase the participation and success of individuals with diverse needs in sector programs, services and employment including:*

- *Low-income individuals in post-secondary education and training*
- *Male/Female students in particular programs*
- *Immigrants*
- *Special needs students*

Performance Measures:

- Value of Canada-Saskatchewan integrated student loans authorized and number of Saskatchewan student loans authorized
- Average student debt on consolidation of Canada Student Loans (CSL) and Saskatchewan Student Loans (SSL) following completion of studies

OBJECTIVE 3 – *Support the education and training of Saskatchewan's official minority language community*

Performance Measures:

- Under development

GOAL 4

Social and economic development

OBJECTIVE 1 - *Ensure a skilled labour force*

Performance Measures:

- Educational attainment of the Saskatchewan labour force, age 15+
- Employer satisfaction with SIAST graduates

OBJECTIVE 2 - *Expand research and development*

Performance Measures:

- Under development

OBJECTIVE 3 - *Strengthen community capacity*

Performance Measures:

- Under development

2005-06 Financial Overview

2005-06 ESTIMATES	*(in thousands of dollars)*
Central Management and Services	$12,812
Post Secondary Education	396,763
K-12 Education	582,364
E-Learning	6,999
Training Programs	33,651
Student Support Programs	69,513
Provincial Library	8,581
Early Childhood Development	3,306
Education Property Tax Relief	55,050
Departmental Appropriation	$1,169,039
Capital Asset Acquisitions	(1,045)
Capital Asset Amortization	3,503
Total Expense	$1,171,497

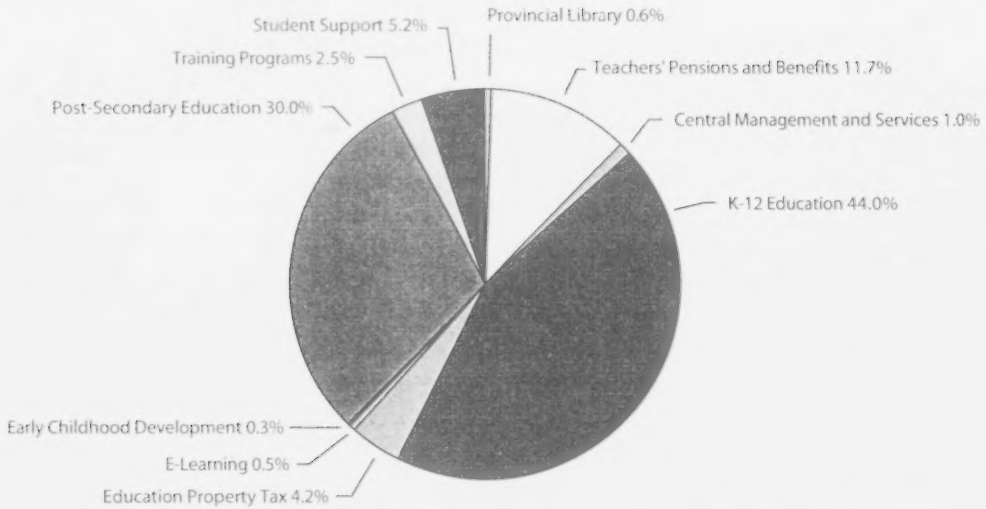
2005-06 Total Appropriation	
Department Appropriation	$1,169,039
Teachers' Pensions and Benefits	155,174
Total Appropriation	$1,324,213
FTE Staff Complement	551.3
REVENUE	$57,163

Major changes in funding for 2005-06 include:

- funding to reduce the reliance on education property tax
- increased funding for universities and federated colleges to maintain tuition fees at the 2004-05 level
- funding to support school division restructuring
- additional funding for the College of Medicine to address accreditation-related deficiencies
- increased training space capacity in nursing, Adult Basic Education, work-based training and Apprenticeship
- enhanced bursary funding to Saskatchewan students at the high-need level of funding
- enhanced digital learning support to increase the number of online learning opportunities

Budgeted funding		
provided to third parties*:	998,150	75%
Made up of funding for:		
Operating	967,120	97%
Capital	31,030	3%

2005-06 APPROPRIATION



** Assumes third parties includes transfers for public service only, not transfers to individuals.*

The total 2005-06 revenue budget of $57.2 million is made up of:

Federal Provincial Agreements	56,233
Client and Private Vocational Schools Fees	557
Refunds of Previous Fiscal Years' Expenditures	326
Rental Revenue	47

Trends and Issues

The learning sector has a significant role in shaping the Province's present and future through support for social and community development, labour market development, and economic diversity and productivity. There are a number of significant trends and issues the learning sector must respond to in fulfilling that role.

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

Saskatchewan's population is projected to remain relatively stable over the next 20 years. However, there will be significant changes within that population. The overall population is aging and, as a result, there will be an inevitable decline in the size of the labour force aged population. (2004 Update to 2000 Labour Market Trends Report)

Saskatchewan has a growing Aboriginal population that is, on average, 10 years younger than the non-Aboriginal population. This represents its competitive advantage over other provinces in offsetting the decline in the labour force. However, that advantage is highly dependent on increasing the educational level of the Aboriginal population. While there have been improvements, the education level of Aboriginal people remains below that of non-Aboriginal people. In 2001, 53 per cent of Saskatchewan's Aboriginal population over the age of 15 had less than Grade 12, as compared to 38 per cent of the non-Aboriginal population. (2001 Census, Statistics Canada)

The aging population also results in fewer school-age children. There were 3,400 fewer pupils in the K-12 system this year than last. The number of Grade 12 graduates will begin to decline in 2008-09, decreasing the traditional source of students for the post-secondary system and the labour market.

The number of individuals who require additional supports and services within the K-12 and post-secondary systems is increasing. The proportion of children with low-incidence disabilities in the K-12 system has increased from 1.5 per cent (2,287 individuals) to approximately three per cent (4,880 individuals) over the past decade (Saskatchewan Learning, Special Education Unit Data, 2004). Children from low-income families are also more likely to require supports. Post-secondary institutions report an increase in the number of students requiring additional supports, reflecting in part the experience within the K-12 system.

Increasing the education levels of Aboriginal people is a key concern for the sector. The sector must also provide programs and services, often at a higher cost, to those with special needs. The sector also has to ensure the delivery of high quality programs and services to rural and northern residents.

Key initiatives being undertaken to address these issues include:

- Implementation of School^{Plus}, an integrated approach to meeting the needs of all K-12 students to ensure learner success;
- Implementation of a Post-Secondary Education and Training Action Plan to increase participation and success of Aboriginal students within post-secondary institutions; and
- Support for and/or partnerships with First Nations and Métis post-secondary institutions.

CHANGING LABOUR MARKET AND ECONOMY

Saskatchewan's economy is becoming more diversified. There has been strong growth in the knowledge-based sectors of the labour market – those that rely more heavily on the use of technology. Saskatchewan is export dependent and must be competitive nationally and internationally in order to prosper. That competitive position is highly dependent on the productivity, creativity and flexibility of its work force.

Due to these changes and others, the labour market demand for post-secondary education is increasing. An estimated 64 per cent of new job openings will require some post-secondary education or management skills. The labour force participation rate for individuals with less than Grade 12 is substantially lower than for those with a university degree – 43 per cent as compared to 83 per cent (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Historical Review, 2004).

Given the increasing demand for higher education levels, there are capacity pressures across the post-secondary system. These are most pronounced in the adult basic education and trades and technical areas.

Increasing importance is being placed on the development of "essential skills" such as problem solving, communication and teamwork as a predictor of labour market success (Youth in Transition Survey, 2002). The rapidly changing labour market also requires that individuals are better able to manage their careers and are aware of the range of opportunities available to them. There is some evidence that youth in Saskatchewan believe their "essential" skill levels are below that of other Canadian youth and that they have fewer opportunities related to career development. (Youth in Transition Survey, 2002)

Initiatives being undertaken to address these issues include:

- Incorporation of Common Essential Learnings, comparable to the essential skills, within the K-12 Core Curriculum;
- Work experience opportunities within the K-12 and post-secondary systems;
- Agreements between K-12 school divisions, SIAST and SATCC to provide SIAST credit for K-12 programming;
- Provision of training directly related to jobs through the JobStart/Future Skills program; and
- Increase in health-related program capacity at the universities and SIAST.

COMPETITIVENESS AND QUALITY

There are growing public expectations for demonstrated quality and competitiveness in the learning sector and a greater focus on outcomes and accountability. This is reinforced by the demographic and labour market trends that underscore the necessity of ensuring positive outcomes for all individuals served by the sector.

There is increasing evidence of the importance of early childhood development and learning in laying the foundation for future success. Investments made in the early years have long-term social, family, labour market and health benefits.

Recent international assessment results indicate that Saskatchewan students are doing less well in reading, science and mathematics than in the past (Programme International Student Assessment, 2003). High quality education for all K-12 students must be a priority. The ability of school divisions to provide quality education and the sustainability of the system must also be assured. There has been a wide disparity in the financial resources available to school divisions across the Province which raises issues of equity for both students and taxpayers. Assessment per student is used as the measure of the relative wealth of a division. Provincial funds are used to assist divisions with less capacity to raise money locally. However, when a school division's recognized revenues exceed recognized expenditures, it no longer qualifies for provincial funding. Some wealthier divisions are able to spend close to $14,000 per student as compared to the provincial average of $8,000 per student.

The quality of post-secondary education is influenced by many factors: highly qualified faculty and staff; responsive and relevant curricula; up-to-date equipment; facilities and the use of technologies. Research and development is an important component of quality, particularly at the universities. It contributes to the development of new knowledge and the transfer of knowledge and impacts on the universities' ability to attract and retain faculty and students. There is increasing competition among institutions, nationally and internationally, to attract and retain faculty and students within a leading edge learning, teaching and research environment.

The affordability of post-secondary education must also be considered. There are concerns among students, their families and others about the increasing cost of education, particularly in relation to tuition. The costs of education rise for people who have to relocate to go to school; over half of Saskatchewan's population lives more than 80 km away from a post-secondary institution.

Initiatives undertaken to address these issues include:

- Development of Early Learning and Care Framework;
- Restructuring of K-12 school divisions to ensure that all K-12 students have access to quality programs within a sustainable system;
- Development of K-12 Assessment for Learning Program;
- Recruitment and retention initiatives across the sector;
- Increased research and development activity at the universities; and
- Improvements to the Canada-Saskatchewan student loan program.

Changes from 2004-05 Performance Plan

The 2005-06 Performance Plan was again created with active engagement of the learning sector through the Learning Sector Steering Committee. The 2005-06 vision remains essentially the same as for the 2004-05 plan. However, the sector added "linguistically" to reflect the linguistic duality of Canada and the contributions of Saskatchewan's Francophone community in that duality. The sector's goals remain unchanged from last year.

Five objectives have been reworded to provide more focus on intended outcomes. Two objectives have been modified somewhat, but the overall policy direction remains the same. The following objective was added to more clearly define "transitions" as a priority area for the sector: *"Support transitions among and within sector programs and services, as well as, employment' (Goal 2, Objective 2).*

Saskatchewan Learning worked with its sector partners over the past year to define measures for 2005-06 that were clearer, more outcome focused, based on available data, credible, reliable and critical in showing the level of progress in critical areas for the sector.

The following four measures that were in the 2004-05 plan are not included in the 2005-06 plan because they are not outcome focused, and because of limited data availability:

- Saskatchewan Grade 12 students' plans for post-secondary education;
- Aboriginal participation rates;
- Participation rates of students with disabilities; and
- Number of women in non-traditional areas of study at SIAST and SATCC.

The following measure was added to the plan for 2005-06:

- Value of Canada-Saskatchewan integrated student loans authorized and number of Saskatchewan student loans authorized.

Goals, Objectives, Actions and Measures

This section provides the detailed 2005-06 Performance Plan for Saskatchewan's learning sector that supports advancement towards our vision. Under each goal, a number of objectives have been established that support progress towards the broader goal statement. For each objective, a set of key actions that will be completed in 2005-06 has been identified. They are the means for making progress on the objectives. To assess whether key actions support the objective, a set of performance measures has been established for each objective to gauge progress towards meeting the objective.

The 2005-06 Financial Plan incorporates several key cost drivers, including changing demographics; changing labour market needs; inflation; collective bargaining settlements; maintenance, equipment and capital costs; and the impacts of federal provincial agreements. There are several sources of funding within the learning sector: individuals, property taxpayers, and governments. The sector must balance these resources to achieve positive outcomes for learners and ensure the quality of the system. For example, aging capital facilities in post-secondary institutions, schools and public libraries require increased support for maintenance and replacement. The sector's infrastructure has an impact on its ability to attract and retain faculty and students, particularly within the post-secondary system.

GOAL 1

Learners succeed

OBJECTIVE 1 *– Optimize children's readiness to learn in school*

Ensuring children are able to benefit from learning opportunities available to them throughout their lives is a critical component of lifelong learning. Studies have shown that development in the early years provides a foundation for skills that impact learning, behaviour and health throughout life. "Readiness to learn" is a broad concept that includes physical, social and emotional well-being, cognitive readiness and openness to learning.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- In collaboration with the Department of Community Resources and Employment, begin implementation of a five-year Early Learning and Child Care plan [Learning]

What are we measuring?	**Where are we starting from?**
Under development	Under development

OBJECTIVE 2 *– Enhance learner outcomes*

The learning sector is committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for individual learners based on their own needs, interests, aptitudes and abilities. Individuals share in this responsibility. Specific definitions of positive outcomes vary across the sector. In general they would include, but not be limited to: academic achievement, social and emotional well-being, employability skills, professional and technical skills and ability to contribute positively to family, community and society as a whole.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Improve learner outcomes:
  - Implement restructured K-12 school divisions based on new boundaries by January 2006 [Learning]
  - Establish a new accountability framework for K-12 school divisions based on student outcomes, including local accountability [Learning]
  - Complete review of the Foundation Operating Grant [Learning]
  - Provide $55 million in education property tax relief to Saskatchewan taxpayers [Learning]
  - Implement Reading Comprehension student learning assessment province-wide [Learning]

- Define outcomes, expand options and implement supports for enhancements to post-secondary learning programs:
  - ~ Complete major study on teaching and learning to support improved learning outcomes at the university level [U of S]
  - ~ Provide a superior student experience [U of R]
  - ~ Continue to invest in the quality learning organization concept focusing on organizational culture, employee development and student support and evaluation [SIAST]
  - ~ Implement the two remaining components of the SIAST student success strategy (career and personal preparedness) [SIAST]
- Continue support for recognition of prior learning within the post-secondary system:
  - ~ Increase activity in prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) [SIAST]
  - ~ Provide access to Recognition of Prior Learning services through specific projects including: SAHO proposal, Northern Development Agreement [Regional Colleges]
- Develop initiatives to assist learners to complete programs:
  - ~ Enhance student support initiatives such as Native Access Program to Nursing, Science and Health Aboriginal student success initiative, English as a second language strategy, post-secondary success program, counselling services, and learning assistance programs [SIAST]
  - ~ Provide comprehensive career counselling, assessment and testing throughout the students' programs to ensure their success when selecting their program of study [Regional Colleges]

What are we measuring?	**Where are we starting from?**
Number of graduates/completers by type of credential, and selected education and training programs:	
• Degree (undergraduate and graduate)	4,964
• Diploma/Certificate	4,441
• Apprenticeship (receiving journeyperson papers)	1,043
• Grade 12	12,308
• Basic education	3,103
• JobStart/Future Skills	3,376
	[2002-03; latest data available]

Graduation/completion measures the success of individuals in programs and services and the sector's contributions to positive outcomes for learners through its curricula, instructional approaches, student services and supports, facilities and equipment.

The measure provides an assessment of how well the sector is doing in terms of producing qualified graduates and program completers.

K-12 Education System – The current age structure of the Saskatchewan population shows that Saskatchewan has a relatively large number of youth in the 10-19 age group. As this generation continues to age and move through the education system over the next decade, there will be a significant decline in K-12 student enrolments. Enrolments in Grades 9-12 are forecast to fall by 21 per cent by 2013-14 as the current under-10 age group moves through the school system, thereby impacting the number of Grade 12 graduates.

Over time, this measure will be impacted by the projected decreasing enrolments in the K-12 system. However, the proportion of students who successfully complete Grade 12 is expected to be positively impacted by programs and services available.

Post-Secondary Education System – The number of graduates/completers is affected by the changing reality of student life such as part-time attendance, part-time work, raising families and changing programs. While the absolute number of graduates/completers is increasing for most types of credentials and programs, the amount of time required to complete a program may change depending on a student's needs and circumstances.

What are we measuring?	**Where are we starting from?**
Per cent of students in a cohort-starting Grade 10 who finish within three years after they start.	73.9% *[2004 result based on 2000-01 cohort]*

Graduation is a proxy for the success of high school students. The Department has revised this measure for 2005-06. Last year's Plan measured graduation by cohort finishing within three to seven years. This year, the measure focuses on a three year period as this is the time period within which students are expected to graduate. The baseline data has been adjusted to reflect the new three year measurement period.

What are we measuring?

Percentage of K-12 students performing at age appropriate (target) levels in mathematics, science, reading and writing on national assessments.

Where are we starting from?

SAIP
Age 13 Students

Reading	76.1% *[1998; latest data available]*
Science	75.5% *[1999; latest data available]*
Math (Problem Solving)	60.8% *[2001; latest data available]*
Math (Content)	52.1% *[2001; latest data available]*
Writing	75.4% *[2002; latest data available]*

SAIP
Age 16 Students

Reading	64.9% *[1998; latest data available]*
Science	77.4% *[1999; latest data available]*
Math (Problem Solving)	45.3% *[2001; latest data available]*
Math (Content)	42.4% *[2001; latest data available]*
Writing	57.1% *[2002; latest data available]*

This measure describes the age appropriate performance of Saskatchewan students in mathematics, science, reading and writing resulting from the School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP). This is a cyclical program of pan-Canadian assessments of student achievement in mathematics, reading and writing, and science that has been conducted by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada since 1993. SAIP produces an estimate of how our students are doing relative to other jurisdictions.

Many factors influence student performance, some of which are beyond the control of the sector such as individual motivation and personal circumstances. The sector's contribution to student performance includes curricula, teaching, student supports and facilities. Student performance

is impacted by the Department curriculum development and the school division's curriculum implementation.

School programs differ from one part of the country to another, making comparisons of results from these various programs a complex task.

OBJECTIVE 3 *– Deliver high quality curriculum, programs, and services*

The learning sector is committed to continuous improvement to provide high quality curriculum, programs, services and resources to ensure that Saskatchewan citizens have access to opportunities that are comparable to or better than those available elsewhere. This helps to ensure that individuals acquire the knowledge and skills required to meet family, community and work responsibilities and that the sector responds effectively to community, social and economic needs.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Ensure high quality, relevant curriculum:
  - ~ Renew Native Studies 20 curriculum [Learning]
  - ~ Implement the Social Sciences curriculum of the Adult 10 Basic Education redesign [Learning]
- Undertake the following evaluations:
  - ~ Employment Readiness Scale pilot project in conjunction with the Department of Community Resources and Employment. [Learning]
  - ~ Forestry Program [Learning]
  - ~ Summative evaluation of the Canada-Saskatchewan Integrated Student Loan Program in conjunction with HRSDC [Learning]
  - ~ Summative evaluation of the Labour Market Development Agreement in conjunction with the Department of Community Resources and Employment [Learning]
- Complete a review of the post-secondary training system [Learning]
- Expand learning opportunities and support services available through CommunityNet to all public, separate, Francophone and First Nations Schools, as well as public libraries [Learning]
- Continue development of a strategy to create stronger linkages between public libraries and school libraries [Learning]
- Deliver high quality curriculum, programs and services through continuous improvements within the learning sector:
  - ~ Increase funding to the University of Saskatchewan's College of Medicine to ensure ongoing accreditation of the College [U of S; Learning]

- ~ Complete a six-year year review cycle that assesses the quality of all academic programs under Systematic Program Review [U of S]
- ~ Continue implementation of single framework of education and training for all credit programs [SIAST]
- ~ Refine program development and delivery processes [SIAST]
- ~ Validate demand for programs [SIAST]
- ~ Strengthen existing partnerships and form new alliances with business and industry in Saskatchewan [SIAST]

What are we measuring?	**Where are we starting from?**
Public satisfaction with the learning sector:	
• Per cent of residents who think the quality of K-12 education in Saskatchewan is:	
~ Good to excellent	55%
~ Adequate	29%
• Per cent of residents who think the quality of the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan is:	
~ Good to excellent	56%
~ Adequate	28%
• Per cent of residents who think the quality of service from the public library system is:	
~ Good to excellent	65.2%
~ Adequate	18.9%
	[January 2004; latest data available]

This measure tracks general public perceptions about the learning sector's quality based on results of omnibus polling.

Confidence in the learning sector is reflected in a variety of ways including satisfaction expressed through public polling. Omnibus polls ask a sample of the Saskatchewan population questions related to a variety of issues, including provincial education. The measure provides information on the public's perception of the quality currently viewed in the sector's curriculum, program, services and resources. Quality programs and services are required to ensure learner success increases. Public perceptions related to the learning sector are impacted by a variety of issues including media coverage, other jurisdictions, personal experiences and the opinions of others.

What are we measuring?	Where are we starting from?
Number of post-secondary programs eligible for accreditation, which have achieved accreditation:	
• Degree [U of S, U of R]	100%[1] *[2004-05]*
• Diploma/certificate [SIAST]	96% *[2003-04]*
• Apprenticeship [Red Seal Trades]	100% *[2004-05]*

[1] *The College of Medicine program at the University of Saskatchewan is currently on probation; however, the program still maintains its accreditation.*

Accreditation is a program-specific approach to assessing a program against nationally, provincially or externally established standards of excellence in all aspects of program delivery conducted by an external third party. It assesses curriculum, faculty, facilities, equipment, student services, employer relations, learner progress and retention, graduation rates and graduate employment. The extremely high level of accreditation achieved by the post-secondary system's eligible programs is a good indicator of quality.

The number of programs subject to accreditation is high for diploma/certificate and apprenticeship programs. Non-professional degree programs at the universities tend not be formally accredited.

What are we measuring?	Where are we starting from?
Enrolments by type of credential and type of delivery	
• K-12	174,263
• Degree programs	31,687
• Certificate and diploma programs	5,434
• Apprenticeship	6,380
• Basic education	5,132
• JobStart/Future Skills	4,078
• Regional Colleges	20,788
	[2003-04; except for Certificate and diploma programs, which is 2002-03]

Enrolments identify the number of individuals able to take advantage of available post-secondary programs and services in publicly funded institutions. It is a proxy measure for quality as it indicates individual interest in graduating with credentials from the Province's post-secondary system.

The measure shows participation in the continuum of programs and services offered by the learning sector.

K-12 Enrolments – Enrolments are affected by a range of external factors which the sector does not control, including demographic trends, home schooling, migration and the increase in First Nations and independent schools. The number of enrolments in the K-12 system has declined over the past years reflecting the decline in the population in the under-10 age group.

The current age structure of the Saskatchewan population shows that Saskatchewan has a relatively large number of youth in the 10-19 age group. As this generation continue to age and move through the education system over the next decade, there will be a significant decline in K-12 student enrolments. Enrolments in Grades 9-12 are forecast to fall by 21 per cent by 2013-14 as the current under-10 age group moves through the school system. Participation in K-12 is mandatory until the age of 16.

Post-Secondary Enrolments – This measure identifies the number of individuals able and interested in taking advantage of available post-secondary programs and services in publicly funded institutions. Post-secondary public institutions, private vocational schools and the Department provide an array of programs that are delivered through a variety of formats. Programs include basic education, skills training and university programs that lead to a certificate, diploma, undergraduate, masters or doctorate degree.

Factors which impact individual decisions regarding enrolments in learning sector programs include location, capacity within specific programs and costs. Enrolments are also affected by other factors beyond the sector's control such as demographic and labour market trends.

OBJECTIVE 4 *– Increase access to information and resources through improved use of technology*

Access to information and resources through improved use of technology is a critical component of the learning sector's activity, particularly as the use of technology increases in importance both as a delivery method and as a support to teaching and learning. This is particularly important given Saskatchewan's widely dispersed population. There is also increased interest in the use of technology to meet learning and information needs. The objective underscores the intent of the learning sector to provide equitable access to information and resources and to recognize the differing roles of the partners within the sector.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Enhance digital supports in the K-12 system [Learning]
- Continue development and implementation of on-line access to eligibility information and applications for income support students, including public access sites [Learning]

- Provide comprehensive electronic access to all provincial public libraries and library materials:
  - Implement a publicly accessible comprehensive electronic library and information resource [Provincial Library, Saskatchewan Library Trustees Association, Multi-type Library Board, and Learning]
- Implement the Personalized Access to Web Services (PAWS) portal and a new student information system (SIRUS) to enable internet access to student services including: admissions, registration and fee payments [U of S]
- Integrate technology to enhance access to programs and to improve the quality of the learning experience for all students [SIAST]
- In collaboration with Campus Saskatchewan partners create a Faculty Development Tutorial, specifically designed for Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) participants [U of S]
- Develop a system-wide TEL Strategic Plan [Regional Colleges]

What are we measuring?	**Where are we starting from?**
The number of on-line courses under development, available for delivery and delivered	
Kindergarten - Grade 12	
• Under development	21
• Credit courses – resources available	40
• Credit courses delivered	34
Post-secondary	
• Under development	91
• Credit courses – resources available	128
• Credit courses delivered	11[illegible]
	[2003-04]

This measure is a proxy for access to K-12 and post-secondary education and training through the use of technology and the availability of supports for teachers/faculty and students.

The Province provides funding to the K-12 and post-secondary systems for developing and establishing an array of on-line courses and learning resources. School divisions and post-secondary institutions are responsible for determining what course offerings are delivered from the available array.

GOAL 2

A seamless continuum of formal and informal learning opportunities

OBJECTIVE 1 *– Support co-ordinated and aligned sector planning and operations*

The learning sector is committed to maximizing linkages and opportunities across the sector in support of its goals and objectives. Collaboration across and within the learning sector in support of lifelong learning is necessary to maximize effective use of resources and to meet the public's learning needs effectively. The results of collective action will maximize impact.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Capital planning, prioritization and project implementation:
  - ~ Develop objective and transparent capital prioritization frameworks for SIAST and the universities [Learning]
  - ~ Complete planning for the University of Saskatchewan Academic Health Sciences complex addition project [Learning; U of S]
  - ~ Construct the University of Regina Laboratory Building [Learning; U of R]
  - ~ Continue development of long-term capital planning framework for SIAST [Learning, SIAST]
  - ~ Continue to implement the Western College of Veterinary Medicine major capital project [U of S]
  - ~ Assist school divisions in the planning, design and construction of the twelve major capital projects approved in the fall of 2003 [Learning]
  - ~ Construct Francophone School in Moose Jaw [Learning]
- Develop Adult Basic Education Funding Model [Regional Colleges, Learning, SIAST, DTI]

What are we measuring?	**Where are we starting from?**
Under development	Under development

OBJECTIVE 2 *– Support transitions among and within sector programs and services, as well as employment*

Transition points include:

- Entrance to pre-kindergarten or kindergarten
- From K-12 to jobs and/or post-secondary education
- From post-secondary education to jobs
- Between post-secondary institutions/programs
- From jobs back to secondary or post-secondary education

The learning sector supports transitions by ensuring linkages between and among all parts of the sector to provide a seamless approach to education, training and employment across an individual's lifespan.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Improve student transition from Grade 12 to post-secondary education or work-based learning opportunities and apprenticeship:
  - ~ Support improved career development within the K-12 system [Learning]
  - ~ Establish additional pilots for youth in High School apprenticeship initiative [SATCC]
- Increase the Graduate Tax Credit from $500 to $675 [Learning]
- Expand recognition of prior learning within the post-secondary sector [Learning]
- Implement the Saskatchewan Council for Admissions and Transfer and the public on-line credit transfer guide to facilitate increased transition from K-12 to post-secondary education and transitions among post-secondary institutions [Learning]
- Work continues at the University of Saskatchewan to improve transition from other educational institutions and programs through streamlining of transfer credit assessment [U of S]
- Expand Centennial Merit scholarship funding from $500,000 to $1 million [Learning]
- Develop bridging strategies aimed at enhanced student retention and transition rates from basic education to further education and skills training. [SIAST]
- Expand work based learning opportunities to strengthen links between training and employment:
  - ~ Expand work based learning opportunities in a variety of programs [U of S]
  - ~ Develop entrepreneurship programs in the Colleges of Engineering, Arts and Science and Agriculture [U of S]
  - ~ Delivery programs with work placements and/or job coaching experiences [Regional Colleges]
  - ~ Provide co-op work placements, practicums and work-based training opportunities to strengthen links between training and employment [SIAST]
  - ~ Continue to explore opportunities for increased youth and Aboriginal participation in the trades through the CIC Consortium Partnership [Regional Colleges]
- Work with employers to ensure learners in rural areas have access to high quality trades training [Regional Colleges, SATCC, SIAST]

What are we measuring?	Where are we starting from?
Employment rate by educational attainment of the working age population, age 15+	
• Grade 12	73.3%
• Diploma/certificate	75.4%
• Degree	79.2%
	[February 2003; latest data available]

This measure shows employment rates relative to the highest level of education completed for individuals aged 15 years and older. The transition from education to employment is reflected in this measure.

Employment rates provide a proxy for the learning sector's responsiveness in meeting the needs of employers and the economy. This measure reflects the critical importance of training and education to employment. Education has been established as key factor in gaining employment and this relationship is becoming stronger over time in the knowledge economy.

Employment rates are influenced by many factors. While educational attainment is an important factor in gaining employment, it is only one of many possible determinants. This measure is vulnerable to external factors in the economy over which the sector has limited control such as employment rates, economic activity and employer's hiring decisions.

GOAL 3

Inclusiveness

OBJECTIVE 1 – *Increase the participation and success of Aboriginal people in sector programs, services and employment*

The learning sector is committed to working in partnerships to improve the participation and success of Aboriginal people in all sector programs and services. The Province has a growing young Aboriginal population that is potentially its greatest asset in offsetting the decline in the labour force due to the aging population. Despite recent gains, the education level of the Aboriginal population is below that of the non-Aboriginal population. The unemployment rate of the Aboriginal population is higher than the non-Aboriginal population. Improvements are necessary in order to ensure the Province's social and economic well-being and for the Province to benefit from Aboriginal perspectives and culture.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Increase the participation and success rates of Aboriginal learners within the primary and secondary education system:
  - ~ Within restructured school divisions, build on existing and create new partnerships between First Nations and the K-12 system [Learning]
  - ~ Renew First Nations and Métis Education Policy to ensure Pre-kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum is relevant to Aboriginal people [Learning]
  - ~ In partnership with First Nations and Métis communities, develop a comprehensive framework for Effective Practices in Aboriginal Education [Learning]
  - ~ Establish a Shared Standards Council between the provincial education system and band schools [Learning]
- Increase the participation and success rates of Aboriginal learners within the post-secondary system:
  - ~ Accelerate implementation of strategies for a representative workforce and student body [SIAST]
  - ~ Collaborate with the post-secondary sector, Aboriginal institutions and industry in the exploration of opportunities for a northern centre of excellence. [SIAST]
  - ~ Increase linkages with Aboriginal organizations and elementary and high schools in an effort to provide services that meet the needs of First Nations and Métis students. [SIAST]
  - ~ Expand the development and delivery of programs specifically tailored for First Nations and Métis students. [SIAST]
  - ~ Continue to develop culturally sensitive curriculum and adaptive delivery of trades training [SIAST]
  - ~ Continue to promote development of a representative workforce through participation on the Provincial Aboriginal Representative Workforce Council and the CIC Consortium [Regional Colleges]
  - ~ Promote trades programming and work on pilot projects under the Aboriginal Apprenticeship initiative through a co-operative effort with tribal councils, Métis organizations and other training institutions [Regional Colleges]
  - ~ Establish a mathematics and science transitional program for Aboriginal students [U of S]
  - ~ Develop and implement an Aboriginal achievement program [U of S]
  - ~ Establish an Aboriginal Education Research Centre [U of S]
  - ~ Continue to implement the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiatives program [SATCC]

What are we measuring?	Where are we starting from?
Educational attainment of the Aboriginal population in Saskatchewan, age 15+:	
• High School Graduate	8.2%
• Some Post-Secondary Education	13.1%
• Certificate or Diploma Graduate	21.6%
• University Degree Graduate	4.6%
	[2001; latest data available]

Educational attainment is a key indicator in tracking improvements in the participation and success of Aboriginal people in the learning sector over time. The measure provides an overarching assessment of the educational status of the Province's Aboriginal population.

The learning sector contributes to increasing the knowledge and skills of the Province's Aboriginal population. There is a significant gap between the educational attainment of the non-Aboriginal population and Aboriginal population according to census data.

Individual educational attainment is influenced by several factors beyond the control of the sector. The sector does influence this measure through the design and implementation of programs, services and delivery methods designed to meet the needs of Aboriginal people.

What are we measuring?	Where are we starting from?
Aboriginal graduation rates by type of credential:	
• Grade 12	42.4% *[2000-01; latest data available]* *[Number of self-identified Aboriginal graduates as a per cent of the total number of self-identified Aboriginal students from a given Grade 10 cohort]*
• Degree	
~ U of S	5.8% *[2003-04]*
~ U of R	N/A
• Diploma/Certificate	
~ SIAST	11% *[2002-03; latest data available]*
~ U of R	N/A
~ U of S	4.0% *[2003-04]*
• Apprenticeship	3.2% *[2003-04]* *[Except for Grade 12, these figures show the number of self-identified Aboriginal graduates as a per cent of the total number of graduates]*

This measure provides an assessment of how well the sector is doing in terms of producing qualified Aboriginal graduates and program completers.

Aboriginal graduation rates measures the success of First Nations and Métis peoples in programs and services, and the sector's contributions to positive outcomes for Aboriginal learners through its curricula, instructional approaches, student services and supports, facilities and equipment. The intent of the measure is to provide information on improving educational outcomes for First Nations and Métis people.

K-12 Education System – Changing demographics will impact the number of children/youth who are in the K-12 system. There will be increasing numbers of Aboriginal children/youth, who traditionally have had lower graduation rates than non-Aboriginal children and youth moving through the K-12 system in the next few years. Increasing the success of Aboriginal children and youth in the K-12 system is a priority for the learning sector.

Post-Secondary Education System – The number of Aboriginal graduates/completers and success in the post-secondary system is affected by the changing reality of student life such as part-time attendance, part-time work, raising families and changing programs. The cost of post-secondary education and rising entrance requirements make access to post-secondary institutions a challenge. While the absolute number of graduates/completers is increasing for most types of credentials and programs, it is difficult to know if the same can be said for Aboriginal graduates as sector-wide reporting has not been completed until now.

OBJECTIVE 2 – *Increase the participation and success of individuals with diverse needs in sector programs, services and employment including:*

- *Low-income individuals in post-secondary education and training*
- *Male/Female students in particular programs*
- *Immigrants*
- *Special needs students*

The learning sector is committed to increasing sector-wide participation and success of individuals with diverse needs. Increased participation and success will lead to higher levels of educational attainment (kindergarten through post-secondary) and will contribute to improved labour market participation and success.

- National data indicates that youth from families with lower earnings are less likely to attend post-secondary education.
- Over the decade ending in 2001-02, the number of students with low-incidence disabilities within the Province's K-12 system doubled from approximately 2,250 to 4,500. The educational attainment of adults with disabilities is somewhat lower than that of adults without disabilities, but their unemployment rate is significantly higher.

- There are issues related to the participation and success of boys and girls within the learning sector. Recent research indicates boys do less well in school than girls within the K-12 system. There are areas of over and under representation for both women and men in particular programs within the post-secondary system.
- Ensuring recognition of the prior learning and credentials of immigrants will contribute to meeting the skill requirements of the provincial labour force.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Improve the affordability of post-secondary education and training:
  - ~ Provide $6.7 million to the Universities of Regina and Saskatchewan and their federated colleges to maintain tuition fees at the 2004-05 level [Learning]
  - ~ Allocate funding for additional student bursaries [Learning]
  - ~ Undertake a review of the Province's student financial assistance program [Learning]
- Increase the participation and success of students with diverse needs:
  - ~ Begin implementation of the Provincial Literacy Strategy [Learning, Regional Colleges, SIAST, and DTI]
  - ~ Collaborate with other human service departments in implementation of a Provincial Disabilities Strategy [Learning]
  - ~ Collaborate with the Departments of Health and Community Resources and Employment in the implementation of the Cognitive Disabilities Strategy [Learning]
  - ~ Provide enhanced funding support through additional scholarship and bursary funding to students with diverse needs [U of S]
  - ~ Undertake a major study of recruitment and retention of students with diverse needs [U of S]
  - ~ Improve services for students with disabilities by increasing the physical accessibility of the U of S Campus [U of S]
- Increase the participation and success of immigrants:
  - ~ Work with federal and provincial partners to meet the training and integration needs of new Canadians including ESL programs [Regional Colleges]
- Make apprenticeship training and certification available to individuals based on individualized assessment, eliminating the need for high school grade level entry [SATCC]
- Expand and diversify the student body [U of R]

What are we measuring?	Where are we starting from?
Value of Canada-Saskatchewan integrated student loans authorized	
• Total	$131,592,816
~ Canada	$71,861,183
~ Saskatchewan	$59,731,633
	[2003-04]
Number of Saskatchewan student loans authorized	16,449
	[2003-04]

Some individuals experience financial barriers to post-secondary education in Saskatchewan. The Province provides a range of income support programs to provide financial assistance to learners. Canada-Saskatchewan Integrated Student Loans are provided based on financial need. The majority of students receiving loans would be considered low-income. This value indicates the level of funding available to individuals who are pursuing post-secondary education and training and includes the low-income demographic.

The value of Canada-Saskatchewan integrated student loans authorized and the number of Saskatchewan student loans authorized is influenced by a number of factors including:

Program Changes – Saskatchewan is one of three provinces with an integrated federal-provincial student loan. Any federal government changes to the Canada Student Loan Program affect the number and value of student loans authorized.

Student loans are authorized based on meeting certain criteria. Changes to eligibility criteria will affect authorization.

The Department provides debt reduction benefits through grants and bursaries to reduce the amount of loan the student will have to repay. The Department also offers debt management assistance to eligible students through Interest Relief and Debt Reduction in Repayment.

The Cost of Accessing Post-Secondary Education – Saskatchewan's post-secondary institutions are challenged with balancing the competing priorities of quality, access, affordability for Saskatchewan students. One of the ways the post-secondary educational institutions have obtained additional resources to address operating and capital pressures is by increasing tuition. Post-secondary institutions are responsible for determining tuition and other fees. The Government has always encouraged institutions to limit tuition fee increases, but does not have direct control over these policy decisions.

As well, Saskatchewan has a large rural population that faces geographic and additional financial barriers to post-secondary education. Income support programs are provided by the Department to help support individuals facing financial barriers to post-secondary education.

Authorized student loans are loans that have been approved for funding. This does not necessarily mean that the student has negotiated the loan documents to initiate receipt of the funds.

What are we measuring?	**Where are we starting from?**
Average student debt on consolidation of Canada Student Loans (CSL) and Saskatchewan Student Loans (SSL) following completion of studies	$14,773 *[2003-04]*

This measure indicates the average student debt on consolidation of CSL/SSL. It is one factor to consider related to the participation of low-income people in post-secondary education as the amount of anticipated debt may impact their decision to pursue further education and training. In 2002, approximately four out of five 18-24 year olds from families with annual earnings of $80,000 or more had taken some post-secondary education as compared to approximately one in two 18-24 year olds from families with annual earnings of less than $30,000.

This measure does not track student debt on an individual basis over the length of a program of study, nor does it reflect total borrowing (either public or private). The number represents all borrowers who enter repayment (i.e., successful and unsuccessful completers).

Student debt loads do not take into account a student's ability to repay a debt or the overall investment that education represents over an individual's lifetime. Higher levels of student debt reflect the increase in the cost of post-secondary education generally and also the costs of living.

OBJECTIVE 3 – *Support the education and training of Saskatchewan's official minority language community*

The learning sector provides support for the education and training of Saskatchewan's Francophone community. Linguistic duality is a fundamental characteristic of Canada and Saskatchewan's Francophone community is an important component of the linguistic duality.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Implement a plan for Francophone post-secondary education in partnership with the Fransaskois community [Learning]
- Continue to provide national apprenticeship certification exams in French and translate provincial apprenticeship certification exams into French as needed [SATCC]

What are we measuring?

Under development

Where are we starting from?

Under development

GOAL 4

Social and economic development

OBJECTIVE 1 *– Ensure a skilled labour force*

The learning sector is committed to responding to the changing skill needs of the Province's economy. We must ensure the learning system is informed by and responsive to labour market demands and changing needs of the provincial economy. Increased globalization, technological changes and a shift towards a knowledge-based economy are all contributing to the need for a highly skilled labour force. It is estimated that approximately 64 per cent of all new job growth in Saskatchewan will require post-secondary and/or management level skills.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Develop approaches to ensure Saskatchewan citizens have the skills and knowledge required to meet the changing demands of the economy:
  - ~ Increase training capacity for work-based training, Adult Basic Education and Apprenticeship [Learning, SATCC, SIAST, Regional Colleges]
  - ~ Expand the Nursing Education Program of Saskatchewan (NEPS) [Learning, U of S, SIAST]
  - ~ Consult with business and industry on labour market requirements and respond quickly to emerging training needs by providing relevant and up to date curriculum [SIAST]
  - ~ Implement technical training and certification for three recently designated new apprenticeship trades/sub-trades, including Meat Cutter Trade, Scaffolder Sub-Trade and Framer Sub-Trade [SATCC]
  - ~ Designate one new apprenticeship trade to meet the needs of employers and employees for work-based training and certification [SATCC]

What are we measuring?	Where are we starting from?
Educational attainment of the Saskatchewan labour force, 15+:	
• High school graduate	23.5%
• Some post-secondary education	9.2%
• Certificate or diploma graduate	33.9%
• University degree graduate	15.0%
	[2003]

The measure provides an overarching assessment of the educational status of the Province's labour force. It is one indicator of the learning sector's contribution to increasing the knowledge and skills of individuals who are employed or seeking employment.

Demographic trends have a positive effect on this measure, largely due to mortality rates (previous generations characteristically had lower educational attainment levels) and more young people entering post-secondary education.

There is an increasing demand for post-secondary education within the provincial labour market.

Saskatchewan currently has one of the lowest levels of educational attainment in comparison to other provincial jurisdictions.

What are we measuring?	Where are we starting from?
Employer satisfaction with SIAST graduates:	
• Satisfied/very satisfied with SIAST graduates	96%
• Rated job knowledge as good/very good	75%
• Rated overall job preparation as good/very good	76%
• Would hire SIAST graduates again	97%
	[2002; latest data available]

This measure provides specific information about employer satisfaction with SIAST graduates based on a survey completed every two years. Satisfaction ratings are a good indicator of employers' perception of how well programs are meeting their needs.

A range of environmental factors can significantly influence satisfaction surveys including knowledge of programs, assessment of the performance of a particular individual or group of individuals and perceptions of other public services. Satisfaction surveys tend to reach a maximum level, after which further significant improvements are unlikely.

OBJECTIVE 2 – *Expand research and development*

The learning sector is committed to expanding research and development. Research and development furthers the creation of new knowledge and the transfer of knowledge. It supports greater innovation and productivity within the economy and social development.

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Grow and sustain a balanced research culture [U of R]
- Establish research alliances through partnerships [U of S]
- Establish a total of 10 research groups in the areas of health, natural and applied sciences, humanities, social sciences and arts [U of S]

What are we measuring?	**Where are we starting from?**
Under development	Under development

OBJECTIVE 3 – *Strengthen community capacity*

Community capacity is a broad concept – the sum of those characteristics that affect a community's ability to identify, mobilize, and address a broad range of issues of concern. Areas of concern may include those that are social, cultural, recreational, economic, or civic. The learning sector provides a variety of initiatives aimed at increasing the capacity of geographic communities throughout the Province (e.g., distance education, regional colleges, public libraries, SchoolPlus, etc.)

Key Actions for 2005-06

- Provide an additional $1.8 million from the Innovation and Science Fund to the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO) for research purposes [Learning]
- Define the University of Saskatchewan's relationship with its external communities by completing work on the Outreach and Engagement Foundational document [U of S]
- Contribute our expertise to the life and progress of the community [U of R]

- Work with community partners to assist with addressing community development issues [Regional Colleges]
- Enhance the University's recognition and esteem [U of R]
- Build and maintain beneficial partnerships and relationships [U of R]

What are we measuring?

Under development

Where are we starting from?

Under development

For More Information

If you have any questions or comments, or would like additional copies of the 2005-06 Performance Plan, we invite you to call (306) 787-9478.

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You can also visit the Department's website at www.sasked.gov.sk.ca to download a copy of the plan. On the website you will also find more information about the Department's programs and services, as well as links to sector partner information.